

# 2

Airport and Maritime  
Operations Manual

## Airport Operations

### *Clearing Aircraft*

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#### Introduction

The *Clearing Aircraft* section of Airport Operations provides guidelines for identifying, inspecting, and clearing aircraft, and taking action on contaminants and pests.

#### Materials Needed

Items you will need for inspecting aircraft are as follows:

- ◆ Resmethrin aerosol spray
- ◆ Flashlight
- ◆ Hearing protection equipment (ear plugs, headset)
- ◆ Large plastic garbage bags
- ◆ Pill boxes (for large, adult insects)
- ◆ Pocketknife

- ◆ Quarantine tags
- ◆ Vials




## Methods and Procedures

It is assumed that you already have information on the aircraft arrival since the owner/operator or representative is required to provide this information under the provisions of Advance Notification of Arrival.



### Step 1: Determining Which Aircraft Require Clearance

Use **Table 2-3-1** to guide you in determining whether or **not** to provide clearance.

**TABLE 2-3-1 Determine Whether to Provide Aircraft Clearance**

If the flight originated in:	And is:	And was:	And is:	Then:
Canada or the U.S. Virgin Islands				DO <b>NOT</b> provide PPQ clearance
Foreign country <b>other than</b> Canada or the U.S. Virgin Islands	U.S. military			GO to <b>Table 2-3-5 on page 2-3-4</b>
	Civilian or foreign military	Precleared		DO <b>NOT</b> provide PPQ clearance
		<b>Not</b> precleared	Transiting the U.S.	GO to <b>Table 2-3-2 on page 2-3-3</b>
			<b>Not</b> transiting the U.S.	GO to <b>Table 2-3-3 on page 2-3-3</b>
			Charter aircraft that left a U.S. city for the Bahamas and is ferrying back empty	DO <b>NOT</b> provide PPQ clearance
			<b>Not</b> Charter aircraft that left a U.S. city for the Bahamas and is ferrying back empty	GO to <b>Table 2-3-3 on page 2-3-3</b>


**TABLE 2-3-2 Determine the Need for Clearing Transiting Aircraft**

If the stop is for:	And:	Then:
Refueling only		DO <b>NOT</b> provide PPQ clearance
Crew change only	Customs or Immigration will clear for PPQ	ALLOW Customs or Immigration to clear for PPQ
	Customs or Immigration will <b>not</b> clear for PPQ	GO to <b>Step 3: Considering Using Alternative Boarding Strategies</b> on page 2-3-6
Partial passenger clearance, catering, removal of garbage, or any combination of these three activities with either of the two cells above		

**TABLE 2-3-3 Determine the Need for Providing PPQ Clearance**

If the aircraft is:	Then:
Commercial passenger or cargo	GO to <b>Step 2: Deciding to Wholly or Partially Clear Aircraft</b> on page 2-3-5
Private	GO to <b>Table 2-3-4</b> on page 2-3-3
Foreign state aircraft	GO to <b>Courtesy of the Port</b> on page 2-3-12

**TABLE 2-3-4 Determine the Need for Clearing Private Aircraft**



If aircraft is arriving from:	And:	Then:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Bahamas<sup>1</sup></li> <li>◆ Bermuda<sup>1</sup></li> <li>◆ Mexico<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	Eight or more passengers (including crew) are aboard	GO to <b>Step 3: Considering Using Alternative Boarding Strategies</b> on page 2-3-6 <sup>3</sup>
	Seven or fewer passengers (including crew) are aboard	ALLOW Customs or Immigration to clear for PPQ
<b>Other than</b> Bahamas, Bermuda, or Mexico		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ PROVIDE PPQ clearance<sup>2,3</sup>,</li> <li>◆ GO to <b>Step 2: Deciding to Wholly or Partially Clear Aircraft</b> on page 2-3-5</li> </ul>

- 1 Port Director may decide to have PPQ provide clearance based on advance information.
- 2 Port Director may allow Customs or Immigration to clear based on specific advance information or when past experience shows no pest risk involved.
- 3 When private aircraft arrive after duty hours, only one agency collects the overtime charges (\$25). If other agencies must board the aircraft, the Port Director must negotiate the collection of the single fee. If Customs considers a private, corporate arrival as a commercial flight, then charge reimbursable overtime to the company operating the aircraft. If APHIS elects to board a private aircraft and Customs or Immigration elect **not** to, APHIS will charge each aircraft boarded the \$25 fee. APHIS will **not** prorate charges between carriers.

The preclearance of military flights is done by Military Customs Inspectors (MCIs). Follow these directions to determine if the flight was precleared, partially precleared, or **not** precleared.

1. Check the General Declaration or other documents to verify that the flight was precleared. Then see **Table 2-3-5**.

**TABLE 2-3-5 Determine the Need for Clearing U.S. Military Flights (Both Military and Charter Aircraft)**

If there is:	And the term:	Then:
A stamp impression that reads "PRECLEARED for (by) U.S. Customs and Agriculture"	"Agriculture" has been lined out in red	1. CONTROL the garbage on the aircraft 2. REINSPECT passengers if prohibited material could easily have been removed from the aircraft <sup>1</sup>
	"Agriculture" has <b>not</b> been lined out in red	<b>DO NOT</b> PROVIDE PPQ clearance <sup>2</sup>
No stamp impression that indicates preclearance		GO to 3., below
A red line drawn diagonally across the declaration with a note why preclearance was denied		PROVIDE PPQ CLEARANCE, GO to <b>Step 2: Deciding to Wholly or Partially Clear Aircraft</b> on page 2-3-5

1 Foreign milk is authorized for use on precleared flights. Therefore, if you do find foreign milk on board, it is unnecessary to reinspect the flight. However, if foreign milk is carried off the aircraft, pick the milk up.


2 Periodically check 3 to 5 percent of the total number of precleared flights for integrity.

2. If the Base Commander or the Base Commander's designee informs you that the aircraft was precleared and experience verifies that this information is accurate and timely, then it is unnecessary to meet the aircraft. If no one knows if the flight was precleared or tells you that the flight wasn't precleared, then provide clearance. Continue to **Step 2: Deciding to Wholly or Partially Clear Aircraft**.
3. Be alert to any discrepancies. If the flight was declared as precleared but you find that it wasn't, notify Quarantine Policy, Analysis and Support (QPAS). Be prepared to give QPAS the aircraft tail number, the date of arrival, the base where the aircraft arrived, the mission number (if available), and the point of departure.

## Step 2: Deciding to Wholly or Partially Clear Aircraft

Your decision to wholly or partially clear aircraft is based on a specific request from the owner, operator, or representative for permission for partial clearance, and the facilities available at an airport of destination to complete the clearance process. Use **Table 2-3-6** to determine whether to grant partial clearance.

**TABLE 2-3-6 Determine Whether to Grant Partial Clearance**

If you:	And the:	Then:
Do <b>not</b> receive a request for partial clearance		GO to <b>Step 3: Considering Using Alternative Boarding Strategies</b> on <b>page 2-3-6</b>
Receive a request for partial clearance	Airport of destination is USDA approved, and the PPQ office at destination can provide clearance	CONTINUE on in this step below
	Conditions in the above cell are <b>not</b> met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ REQUIRE full clearance</li> <li>◆ GO to <b>Step 3: Considering Using Alternative Boarding Strategies</b> on <b>page 2-3-6</b></li> </ul>

When one or any combination of the tasks involved in full clearance is **not** accomplished at the first airport of arrival, the aircraft is only partially cleared. The tasks include clearing aircraft, passengers/crew, and controlling garbage and cargo. The tasks that are **not** accomplished at the first airport are completed at a subsequent airport. You must complete the following tasks at the first airport of arrival:

1. Remove all whole fruits and other easily accessible items of agricultural interest aboard the plane.
2. Document activities that have been performed (as well as safeguards) on PPQ Form 250, Aircraft Safeguard Orders. (Go to **Step 6: Documenting Aircraft Clearance** on **page 2-3-9** for instructions.) If a flight is regularly scheduled for clearance at more than one airport, then you **do not** need to complete PPQ Form 250, nor do you have to notify other PPQ office(s) of arrival.
3. Grant permission to proceed to another airport only when the airport is USDA approved (only if garbage is left aboard).
4. Call the PPQ office at the airport of destination to notify them of the aircraft arrival and get concurrence that they will complete the clearance. Call any airports where stopovers are scheduled. If contact cannot be made, then clearance must be completed at the first airport of arrival.

If a flight arrives at the first airport with meals containing only nonprohibited items, then the flight may proceed to any airport without need for final clearance after all the following have been done:

1. All passengers and crew are cleared.
2. All baggage is cleared.
3. Aircraft quarters and holds have been inspected.
4. Garbage bins or trash containers have been removed and cleaned.

Go to **Step 6: Documenting Aircraft Clearance** on **page 2-3-9**.

### **Step 3: Considering Using Alternative Boarding Strategies**

Boarding and inspection of aircraft are performed if sufficient time and personnel are available.

Consider using the following alternatives in order to direct time to higher priority activities:

- ◆ Use technicians to board aircraft
- ◆ Waive the boarding of flights that have demonstrated a low risk in relation to:
  - ❖ Hitchhiking pests
  - ❖ Probability of removal of prohibited stores or contraband by unauthorized personnel
  - ❖ Contamination by soil or animal products and manure
- ◆ Grant waivers on a day-to-day basis depending upon staff availability, or you may want more formalized agreements (memos or letters) but **do not** use PPQ Form 519, Compliance Agreement, with the individual airlines
- ◆ Inform the caterer and airline to remove and properly dispose of all meals and garbage aboard the aircraft if you waive boarding
- ◆ Monitor at least 10 percent of all flights which are **not** routinely boarded
- ◆ Monitor aircraft by conducting inspections on an unannounced spot check basis in conjunction with garbage control and surveillance. Place more emphasis on monitoring high-risk arrivals and inspect at least 10 percent of the low-risk arrivals

**TABLE 2-3-7 Determine Action to Take Based on Boarding of Flight**

If you:	Then:
Waive the boarding of a flight	1. <b>DO NOT</b> CONTINUE in this section on clearing aircraft 2. CONTINUE with the next priority, i.e., clearing another aircraft, clearing passengers, controlling garbage
<b>Do not</b> waive boarding	GO to <b>Step 4: Inspecting the Aircraft</b> on <b>page 2-3-7</b>

### Step 4: Inspecting the Aircraft

Look for the following when you inspect the aircraft

- ◆ Hitchhiking pests aboard the aircraft
- ◆ Prohibited stores that might easily be carried off the aircraft by unauthorized personnel
- ◆ Contraband left aboard by crew or passengers
- ◆ Contamination of aircraft by soil, animal secretions, or animal residue (blood, manure, urine)

Consider each of the above when establishing standard operating procedures for inspecting aircraft.

If you are asked by PPQ Headquarters to grant “courtesy of the port” for an aircraft, then go to **Courtesy of the Port** on **page 2-3-12**.

Board the aircraft after all the passengers have deplaned. Unless you authorize other personnel to board, **do not** allow caterers, airline ground service personnel, and other personnel (such as contract cleaners or in-flight movie concessionaire) aboard until you have completed your inspection of the aircraft.

Complete your inspection of the aircraft as quickly as possible so that airline ground handlers, caterers, etc. may begin their jobs. Encourage airlines to have their flight attendants collect and bag fresh fruits for faster clearance. Inspect the following areas aboard the aircraft.

#### Galley Areas/ Stores

Search the galley storage compartments. Bag and remove the following items: whole fruits, fresh vegetables, fresh eggs, and meat that might easily be taken off the aircraft by unauthorized personnel. Mark the flight number, your initials, date, and stores on the bag so identification can be made when examining the contraband. When you suspect fruit is being hidden in sealed liquor stores, you may break airline seals to inspect the cabinets.

If live pests are found, then go to **Step 5: Taking Action on Contaminants And Pests** on **page 2-3-9**.

**U.S. Origin Milk and Cream and U.S. Origin Canned Shelf Stable Meats**

Allow unopened, sealed containers (including paper cartons) of U.S. origin milk and cream and U.S. origin canned shelf stable meats to be retained by the airline for use on flights leaving the United States. This policy applies even if the aircraft has transited foot-and-mouth disease and rinderpest-infected countries.

If meals are being carried as stores, then go to **Meals Carried as Stores** on **page 2-3-11** for the correct action to take.

**Quarters**

Search the passenger and crew compartments. Bag and remove the following items: whole fruits, fresh vegetables, fresh eggs, and meat that might easily be taken off the aircraft by unauthorized personnel. Mark the flight number and quarters on the bag so identification can be made when examining the contraband.

Inspect and safeguard cut flowers and plants that are to be used as furnishings on foreign bound or partially cleared flights.

If you find live pests at large in the quarters, then go to **Step 5: Taking Action on Contaminants And Pests**.

**Cargo Holds on  
Cargo and  
Military Flights**

Cargo and military aircraft are at greater risk for carrying hitchhiking insects. Since cargo holds are generally the most accessible areas for hitchhiking insects, be sure to inspect carefully for flying insects. When inspecting military aircraft, keep all doors and exits closed until the walk-through inspection is completed.

Inspect cargo holds for plant and animal contamination and soil. Generally, the odor of animals is a good indication that animals are, or have been carried aboard. If you suspect there is animal contamination, then question the crew and check the aircraft log to determine if the aircraft previously carried livestock or animal products. Inspect in corners, doorways, etc., for blood, manure, hay, and straw. Also, inspect the cargo closely for animal contamination. If contamination is found, then go to **Step 5: Taking Action on Contaminants And Pests**, below.

If animals regulated by VS are aboard the aircraft, then go to **Taking Action on Live or Dead Animals** on **page 2-3-9** for the correct action to take.



**TABLE 2-3-8 Action to Take After Determining Whether or Not Contaminants or Plant Pests Were Found**

If as a result of your inspection, you have:	Then:
Found contaminants or plant pests	GO to <a href="#">Step 5: Taking Action on Contaminants And Pests</a>
<b>Not</b> found contaminants or plant pests	GO to <a href="#">Step 6: Documenting Aircraft Clearance</a>

### Step 5: Taking Action on Contaminants And Pests

Take action quickly on pests and contaminants found aboard aircraft to prevent risk of pest escape or spread, and to reduce down time of the aircraft for the owner/operator. Use [Table 2-3-9 on page 2-3-9](#) to determine the action you need to take.

**TABLE 2-3-9 Action to Take on Contaminants and Pests**

If you have found:	Then:
Live pests	REQUIRE T409
Soil	REQUIRE cleaning and removal from the aircraft
Animal contamination	REQUIRE cleaning and disinfection with 4 percent sodium carbonate solution with 0.1 percent sodium silicate <sup>1</sup> . (see <a href="#">Directions for Cleaning and Disinfecting</a> on <a href="#">page Q-1-3</a> )

- 1 Sodium carbonate with sodium silicate is the only disinfectant approved for use on aircraft since it does **not** damage aluminum aircraft parts.

### Step 6: Documenting Aircraft Clearance

Complete PPQ Form 213, Airplane Inspection Report after each aircraft is cleared. You will only need to complete those sections of the form that pertain to the aircraft inspection. (The rest of the form will be completed after all passengers and baggage have been cleared.) See [PPQ Form 213, Airplane Inspection Record](#) on [page A-1-9](#) for instructions on completing the form.

If you are partially clearing an aircraft, you will also need to complete PPQ Form 250 if the flight is **not** a normally scheduled flight that proceeds for final clearance at another airport. See [Keep a copy for the Port files.](#) on [page A-1-15](#) for instructions on completing the form.

## Reference Section

### Taking Action on Live or Dead Animals

If animals are found, use [Table 2-3-10](#) to determine the action to take.

**TABLE 2-3-10 Action to Take if Animals Are Found**

If the shipment is:	Then:
Live animals or dead animals that are part of a live animal shipment	GO TO <a href="#">Live Animals</a> , below
Solely dead animals	GO TO <a href="#">Dead Animals</a> , page 2-3-11

## Live Animals

Live animals are the responsibility of VS. Additionally, VS has the responsibility for cleaning and disinfecting the aircraft if it held live animals. Since PPQ is often the first to board the aircraft, follow these instructions when VS is **not** present to meet planes carrying live animals.

**TABLE 2-3-11 Action to Take When VS Is Not Available to Meet Planes Carrying Live Animals**

If the animal group is:	And the animals are:	Then:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Equine</li> <li>◆ Ruminant</li> <li>◆ Swine</li> </ul>	Aboard the aircraft	1. HOLD the animals aboard the aircraft 2. NOTIFY the AVIC or VS Port Veterinarian by telephone
	Off-loaded from the aircraft	1. HOLD the animals and the associated feed, bedding, etc., at the point of discovery <sup>1</sup> 2. NOTIFY the AVIC or VS Port Veterinarian by telephone
Birds (includes poultry and pet birds)	→	1. HOLD the birds 2. NOTIFY the AVIC or VS Port Veterinarian by telephone
Canine <sup>2</sup> (dogs)	Used with livestock <sup>2</sup>	1. HOLD the animals
	With open sore(s) <sup>3</sup>	2. NOTIFY the AVIC or VS Port Veterinarian by telephone
	Without open sore(s) or <b>not</b> used with livestock	RELEASE
<b>Other than</b> horses, ruminant, swine, canine, or birds <sup>4</sup>	→	1. INSPECT cages for prohibited items and have them removed 2. REFER to FWS

- 1 Consider the welfare of the animals in severe weather. If you authorize movement, then clean and disinfect all areas occupied by, or equipment used to move the animals. **Do not** allow movement to an area where other animals are present, or away from the immediate area of the point of discovery. If the aircraft is moving prior to VS arrival, then require cleaning and disinfecting of the aircraft.
- 2 Dogs kept around livestock may carry tapeworms.
- 3 Could possibly be screwworm, which feeds on living tissue.
- 4 Refer primates to Fish and Wildlife and Public Health Service or to Customs.

## Dead Animals

If only dead birds, horses, ruminants, or swine are discovered, then you must verify the cleaning of the aircraft and observe the disinfecting of aircraft and the removal of the carcasses. See [Directions for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) on **page Q-1-3**. Then follow **Table 2-3-12**.

**TABLE 2-3-12 Directions for Handling Aircraft Carrying Dead Animals**

If the animal is:	Then:
Bird, horse, ruminant, swine, or exotic wild animal	1. SAFEGUARD the carcass 2. NOTIFY Headquarters VMO
◆ <b>Other than</b> bird, horse, ruminant, or swine	NO ACTION IS REQUIRED BY PPQ OR VS
◆ Rat, mouse, etc.	

## Meals Carried as Stores

If unused meals are carried aboard aircraft either in the galley or cargo holds, use **Table 2-3-13 on page 2-3-11** to determine the action to take.

**TABLE 2-3-13 Determine Action to Take on Unused Meals Carried Aboard Aircraft in Galleys or Cargo Hold**

If the aircraft is arriving from:	Then:
Canada	ALLOW the meals to be retained aboard the aircraft
Mexico	SEE <a href="#">Meals from Mexico</a> , below
Countries <b>other than</b> those listed in the two cells above	<p>REQUIRE the removal of all meals<sup>1</sup>, milk, and dairy products carried as stores at the first port or arrival, <b>except</b> the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ If requested by the carrier and specifically approved by local PPQ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Individual meals containing seafood or frozen, cooked fowl may be kept on board the airplane for use during the continuation of a partially cleared flight to a subsequent USDA approved domestic port<sup>2</sup></li> <li>◆ All unused meals are to be disposed of with the other regulated garbage at that location</li> <li>◆ Cheese, butter, and dry milk or cream products</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

1 Unless the carrier can be authorized to use meals on turnaround flights. (See [Back-catering Meals](#) below.)

2 Occasionally thaw and check the cooked fowl for thoroughness of cooking.

## Back-catering Meals

Back-catering unused meals on **turnaround flights** may be authorized if the following **four** conditions can be met by the carrier and monitored by the port:

- ◆ Meals must remain aboard the aircraft while at the U.S. port of arrival
- ◆ Meals must be handled only within the aircraft itself

**EXAMPLE** The meals could **not** be removed from the aircraft's belly then brought aboard the aircraft.

- ◆ Carrier must prevent the off loading of any meals from the aircraft while at the U.S. airport. The only exception would be off loading for disposal by sterilization or incineration by a USDA, APHIS-approved catering company
- ◆ Aircraft must depart in fewer than three hours and must be a turnaround flight



**Never** allow the removal of airline meals of foreign origin for storage at the airport for use on outgoing flights.

## Meals from Mexico

In addition to back-catering described previously, Mexican turnaround flights<sup>1</sup> are allowed to carry meals for the return flight to Mexico if they meet the following criteria:

- ◆ Meals must be as follows:
  - ❖ Limited to thoroughly-cooked beef or poultry
  - ❖ Whole fruits or vegetables are **not** allowed in the meal
  - ❖ Sliced or diced salads are acceptable
  - ❖ Contained in disposable boxes with disposable trays, utensils, and dishes
- ◆ Aircraft must leave within approximately 3 hours of landing
- ◆ Flight does **not** stop at any other U.S. airport
- ◆ Airline must notify the local PPQ office of the arrival schedule for all turnaround flights carrying meals

## Courtesy of the Port

Courtesy of the port refers to the privilege granted by Customs and other Federal Agencies, including PPQ, to foreign officials and foreign State aircraft. The courtesies extended normally include a modification in safeguard procedures.

The Department of State formally requests courtesy of the port privileges from the Secretary of Agriculture. The request is handled by PPQ Headquarters in Riverdale who in turn notifies the Regional

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<sup>1</sup> Flights from Mexico to a U.S. city and returning directly back to Mexico.

**Boarding  
Foreign, Public  
Aircraft**

Director and the port of arrival. Generally, you will receive information in advance including the nationality of the aircraft, ports to be visited, and the estimated time and date of arrival.

Unless permission is received from the captain or protocol officer, **do not** board the aircraft. If boarding permission is granted, exercise good judgement in carrying out your duties. Boarding with other Federal agencies is desirable and should be arranged in advance, as well as a discussion of protocol to be observed during boarding.

**Handling  
Garbage**

Make a careful assessment of the plant-pest and animal-disease risk potential associated with the aircraft. Your assessment may be accomplished by questioning the appropriate aircraft officer about the type and origin of the provisions. If actual inspection of any part of the aircraft is warranted, ask for permission and ask to be escorted by a responsible aircraft officer.

Monitor the decatering and removal and disposal of garbage. If aluminum cans are stored separately from garbage during the flight, then the aluminum cans are **not** required to be incinerated or sterilized. Make sure that the garbage is disposed of in an approved method (incineration or sterilization). Go to ***Disposing of Garbage By Approved Methods*** on **page 2-7-6** for instructions on the proper disposal of garbage.

**Handling  
Diplomats  
Aboard Aircraft**

See ***Courtesy of the Port*** on **page 3-4-18**.

